



Preadolescence

Ages 9-12 Upper Elementary School

- ✓ Puberty, when sexual maturity and the ability to reproduce begins, usually starts at the age of 10 for girls and 11 for boys, but can occur earlier or later for both.
- ✓ There are many physical, mental and emotional changes during this time period for your child.
- ✓ Many children worry about their body and whether it is developing normally. Reassure them that they are normal and everyone is different.
- ✓ Children at this age need to know the facts about menstruation, wet dreams and other changes of their body.
- ✓ Children at this age also need to know that sexual feelings are normal and natural and they are ready to know more about how babies are born and the reproductive cycle.
- ✓ They need to know that sexual intercourse has consequences; that it is adult behavior and it is not for young people.
- ✓ They need to know how sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) and HIV are transmitted and how they can be prevented, including the use of abstinence and the use of condoms.
- ✓ Both males and females should be educated about each other, i.e., that during puberty the girls begin to ovulate and menstruate, and boys begin to produce sperm and ejaculate.
- ✓ Children become more curious about their sexuality as they become older.
- ✓ Talking to trusted adults can be helpful.
- ✓ As a parent, be aware of the many influences in their life and keep the lines of communication open.
- ✓ Reinforce your own values and encourage your children to talk to you.

